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From Rocks to Amethysts:

Combination Innovation to Increase Student Achievement in School

by
Jason M. Hall

An Abstract of a Project
in
Creative Studies

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of

Master of Science

December 2019

Buffalo State College
State University of New York
Department of Creative Studies

ABSTRACT OF PROJECT*From Rocks to Amethysts:***Combination Innovation to Increase Student Achievement in School**

My final project at the International Center for Studies in Creativity applies the Torrance Incubation Model of Learning, Creative Problem Solving, Design Thinking, creativity scholar George Land's Transformation Theory, and skills I have gained during my work on the MSc in Creativity. My work herein provides new and useful combination innovations that catalyze creative ways of analyzing, operating more successfully within, and improving upon current state, federal and district mandates and programs in public education. This project is middle school based. The core combination innovations are designed to assist school administrators, instructional coaches, and classroom educators in their daily work in middle schools, supporting them in taking mandated processes and practices, adding to these processes and practices elements from the field of creativity, and catalyzing new and improved, 21st century ready versions for immediate implementation in the school and classroom.

Keywords: combination, innovation, transformation, student owned, action plan, middle school



Signature

December 12, 2019

Date

Buffalo State College
State University of New York
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Dates of Approval:
December 12, 2019



Susan Keller-Mathers
Professor

December 12, 2019



Jason M. Hall
Student

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Acknowledgments

I want to thank my wife Melissa and daughter Kassidy for holding down the fort when Daddy was spending extra hours at work this semester coaching teachers at BPS #80, earning my SBL certificate, running the Buffalo Public Schools' My Brother's Keeper Male Academy and completing this project. I love you both very dearly. You are my life.

To my parents Richard and Allison Hall for the unconditional love and support through the tough years.

I also want to acknowledge my co-worker Mrs. Shelli Payne-Patterson for allowing me to use her classroom as a prototype lab and teaming up with me to implement the combination innovations discussed herein.

To my building principal Mrs. Gayle Irving-White for believing in my creative visions for our school and allowing me to work without limits on implementing the work of my project.

My sincere appreciation to Dr. Sue Keller-Mathers for overseeing my work on my master's project. Thank you for your flexibility, motivation, and guidance.

To George K. Land for your amethyst metaphor. You have inspired me to change the world, one classroom and one metaphoric trip on a grain of sand at a time.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract Title Page.....	i
Abstract of the Project.....	ii
Title Page.....	iii
Signatory Page.....	iv
Copyright Notice.....	v
Acknowledgment Page.....	vi
Table of Contents.....	vii
List of Tables and Figures.....	viii
Section One: Background to the Project.....	1
Section Two: Pertinent Literature.....	7
Section Three: Process Plan.....	12
Section Four: Outcomes.....	15
Section Five: Key Learnings.....	37
Section Six: Conclusion.....	40
Appendices.....	43
References.....	67
Digital Commons Online Permission.....	68

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Figure 1: Rocks and Amethysts Basic Model (Hall, 2019)

Figure 2: Rocks, Amethysts and Me

Figure 3: Design Thinking Model, Stanford Design School

Figure 4: Rocks, Amethysts and the PEAK Planning Template

Figure 5: Rocks, Amethysts and the Student Owned Analysis and Reflection (SOAR) Protocol

Figure 6: Rocks, Amethysts and the Creative Writer's Toolbox

Figure 7: Rocks, Amethysts and the Creative Action Plan (CAP)

Figure 8: Grade 5 Cohorts NYS ELA Assessment Data 2017 and 2018

Figure 9: Grade 5 Cohorts NYS ELA Assessment Data vs. BPS vs. NYS

Figure 10: Grade 6 Cohorts NYS ELA Assessment Data – Growth Analysis

Figure 11: Grade 6 Cohorts NYS ELA Assessment Data vs. BPS vs. NYS

Figure 12: 2018 Grade 6 Cohort 1 NYS ELA Assessment Data – Short Response

Figure 13: 2017 Grade 6 Cohort 1 NYS ELA Assessment Data – Short Response

Figure 14: 2018 Grade 6 Cohort 2 NYS ELA Assessment Data – Short Response

Figure 15: 2019 Grade 6 Cohort 2 NYS ELA Assessment Data – Short Response

SECTION ONE: BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT

This project is school based. The four combination innovations presented herein are designed to assist administrators and educators in their daily work to improve schools by taking common practices, adding to these practices elements from the field of creativity, and catalyzing new and improved versions for immediate implementation. The Torrance Incubation Model of Teaching and Learning (TIM), Creative Problem Solving (CPS), Design Thinking, Transformation Theory, and my personal creativity form the scholarly basis for the combination innovations designed to provide new ways of looking at, operating successfully within, and improving upon current state, federal and local district mandates and programs in public education.

Purpose and Description

The four combination innovations, i.e. the PEAK Planning Template, the Student Owned Analysis and Reflection (SOAR) protocol, Creative Action Plan (CAP) template and the Creative Reader's Toolbox allow the user to apply research based problem-solving techniques, creative problem-solving tools and a variety of creative thinking skills to increase achievement in the classroom.

The four combination innovations will serve as the foundation of my creative leadership portfolio that I will implement as a school building leader to greatly improve upon specific processes and practices currently mandated and implemented daily by administrators and teachers in the Buffalo Public school system as well as many others throughout America's diverse school districts. I recently earned my School Building Leader certification and in my current role of instructional coach I have already begun implementing these innovation prototypes here in Buffalo, NY in the Buffalo Public Schools. I am currently working primarily

with a core group of administrators, coaches and highly effective sixth grade teachers at Highgate Heights Elementary School BPS #80. Upon documenting the success of the four core innovations, I will use this project to gain full time employment as a school building leader, begin the process of forming an educational consulting organization known as ALG, or Amethyst Learning Group, and publish a creative education methods text.

The specific teaching processes and practices the four combination innovations will address include: 1) lesson and unit planning, implementation and facilitation 2) involving students in the discussion of their own data and growth 3) creating, implementing and monitoring action plans based on data and the Data Driven Instruction process and 4) providing students with engaging creative reading interventions. All the above are elements of highly effective teaching practice as noted by the NYSUT teaching rubric and required for implementation by several district, state and federal mandates in education. Moreover, as documented in my current and ongoing ethnographic research that includes working in public education for the past fifteen years, five of which have been spent in public schools in Buffalo, NY, all of the above are also what I refer to as “rocks” that, with the use of the innovations herein this project, have the ability to become “amethysts” with a little hard, but innovative, work. This metaphor is clearly explained in the next section.

Rationale for Selection

What does all of this have to do with a metaphor about rocks and amethysts? In his 1973 text entitled *Grow or Die: The Unifying Principle of Transformation*, creativity theorist George Land portrays a diverse set of life forms and the ways in which they analogously move through and within three stages of growth, i.e., *accretive* or growing only for growing sake, *replicative* or duplication and multiplication of achievements, and *mutual* or reciprocal exchange whereby

creativity proves to be the catalyst for desired, exciting and entirely new advancements (Land, 1973). Positive growth inherently benefits the growing species. According to Land, “Life in its very manifestation is growth and change. Not to grow is to die” (Land, p. 74).

In *Breakpoint and Beyond: Mastering the Future-Today* (Land and Jarman, 1993), both Land and Beth Jarman agree that Land’s transformation growth model put forth in *Grow or Die*, or “Nature’s method,” is the most positive, time tested and effective way to enact growth or change within any individual or organization. Moving further, they define the exact instances at which a life form moves from one stage of growth to the next as breakpoints, and describe the benefits of such breakpoints using the following analogy of a developing amethyst:

Imagine yourself as passenger riding on the edge of a tiny particle of sand. At this minute, your piece of sand, also known as silicon or quartz, is minding its own business while being subjected to immense heat inside a volcano. The temperature rises so much that your grain of sand becomes liquefied. You’re surrounded by confusion, turmoil, and chaos as other atoms hurl past in every direction. All is tumult and disorder.

Slowly, the heat dissipates, and as it does your tiny atom of sand begins to settle into a comfortable relationship with other silicon atoms. Slowly gathering together, the atoms form layers, fitting snugly into a tiny quartz seed crystal. As more and more atoms join the group, the world around you changes radically. The wild ride has settled down. Your trip has moved from disorder to order. You just passed through a natural Breakpoint.

The ride, however, has just begun. The hardening quartz, of which you are now an integral part, starts growing rapidly as additional atoms fuse together, forming large quartz molecules, growing even bigger. Taking shape around you, the almost transparent crystal provides some rules of arrangement, order, and regularity. The ride is smooth and even, continuous and comfortable. The bonds between the silicon atoms have formed molecules that are so strong it seems nothing from outside can intrude on your secure world. Just as you are relaxing, expecting the gentle ride to continue indefinitely, the quartz crystal runs into an immense surprise. What is happening couldn’t be predicted based on the past.

Suddenly, foreign atoms make their way into the crystal. Atoms of copper and magnesium intrude between you and other silicon atoms, spinning things around, grabbing loose atoms and electrons, changing the composition and arrangements of the crystal. Within the crystal new bonds are formed as old configurations vanish; the rules and orderliness

you depended on have gone completely. Nearly overcome by confusion, you can't fathom what's happening. You just passed through another Breakpoint!

As you look around, you find that many of your new bonds with strange atoms are even stronger than before. Light is now refracted in many directions, suffuses with beautiful colors. Actually, you notice that what was once a comfortable but rather dull neighborhood is becoming varied and interesting.

You have just taken a trip from plain old sand to become a quartz crystal and finally emerged as a beautiful amethyst. (Land and Jarman, 15-16)

In the passage above, it is clearly the point of acceptance of the outsider atoms of copper and magnesium that allow the quartz rock to emerge as a beautiful amethyst. Now pretend that you are a plain white piece of rock quartz. Pretend that you are surrounded by other rocks of quartz, exactly like you. For miles and miles your world is colorless. Nothing sticks out as unusual. Everything is similar and plain. Nothing ever changes. If you had the choice, and could easily form into a beautiful amethyst with just a fraction of hard work and a bit of outsider acceptance, would you remain a plain white piece of quartz? Most likely the answer is no.

In applying the Rocks and Amethysts Model to the growth analysis and educational mandate, processes or practice, it becomes quite clear to the owner of the challenge that he or she is risking failure, or in the least confusion and frustration, by ignoring outside influence and ideas in place of accepting these ideas into their current growth cycle. Therefore, my vision for my project is to implement the four core combination innovations that I designed using the metaphoric design tool Rocks and Amethysts in order to improve upon rocks in schools. To fashion the four core combination innovations, I applied design thinking research practices, creativity and CPS tools to ideate, converge on, and gather or create the metaphoric copper and magnesium, and ultimately created a series of amethysts to replace a series of rocks. The current Rocks and Amethysts model (Figure 1) can be seen below.



Figure 1: Rocks and Amethysts Basic Model (Hall, 2019)

Why me?

What qualifies me to facilitate creative, amethyst change with the four core combination innovations? Since I began teaching in 2003, I have dedicated my life to creating curriculum and learning expeditions specifically designed to catalyze change in schools, change that will promote creativity as a means of increasing overall student motivation and achievement. I have designed and implemented curriculum for the middle school classroom and across the paradigms of demographics and intelligences, working under the advisement of experts and even founders from *Expeditionary Learning* as well as with experts in the field from the International Center for Studies in Creativity. Along with holding a BA in comparative literature, MA in English, a CAS in educational leadership, and a NYS school building leader certificate, at the end of this semester I will earn an MS in creativity and change leadership. As a classroom teacher, I have instructed courses in English language arts, Spanish, earth science, creative writing, and humanities within a variety of school designs from charters, to traditional public, to a school for the arts, and ranging geographically from Buffalo, New York to Jacksonville, Florida.

But my most important qualification is that I was once a rock. Creativity and the people who gave me the opportunity to be creative were my copper and magnesium. As a young man and middle school student, I was frequently suspended and expelled from several public schools. I was extremely bored in the traditional classroom where the common task was to read ten or so

pages and answer the four review questions that followed. These activities didn't promote my creative growth at school. Instead, they freed up the last portion of the class period to engage in mischief and comedy.

That all changed the day I returned to school, from what I remember was my last formal suspension, to find a hall pass waiting for me on my desk. It was signed by a teacher named Mr. Cecala and said that I was to report to the auditorium at eleven o'clock. When I arrived, albeit suspicious and curious, Mr. Cecala immediately introduced me to the students gathered there as the new Petruchio in the school's production of *The Taming of the Shrew*. I walked out. Mr. Cecala chased me down the hall, threw me up against the locker, and explained very loudly that he was going to change my life. He did! Theater did! Creativity worked! I changed! Theatre was my copper and Mr. Cecala was my magnesium (Figure 2). I grew from a rock into an amethyst! With Mr. Cecala's help, I found my "creative in" at school and that made all of the difference.



Figure 2: Rocks, Amethysts and Me

SECTION TWO: PERTINENT LITERATURE

Most of my work on this project was inspired by the above metaphor put forth by creativity theorist George K. Land and his groundbreaking text *Grow or Die* (1973). The four combination innovations, i.e. the PEAK Planning Template, the Student Owned Analysis and Reflection (SOAR) protocol, Creative Action Plan (CAP) template and the Creative Reader's Toolbox were inspired by creativity theorists and their work in the field. Theorist E. Paul Torrance and the Torrance Incubation Model (TIM) served as the inspiration behind the PEAK Planning Template. The Thinking Skills Model of Creative Problem Solving, the PPCO tool used in the Student Owned Analysis and Reflection (SOAR) protocol and the Creative Action Plan (CAP) were inspired by the work of my professors at the International Center for Studies in Creativity, including Dr. Sue Keller Mathers and her work with CPS tools in middle schools, Dr. Roger Firestein and his undying love for facilitation of CPS, and the work of Dr. Gerard K. Puccio and his text *Creativity Rising* (2012). Below I have included brief notes about the resources that inspired my original ideas for the combination innovations I listed above and developed for my project.

Land, G. (1973). *Grow or die: The unifying principle of transformation*. New York: Random House.

This text changed my life. The metaphoric trip on which he takes his reader from a grain of sand to plain quartz to a precious gem that becomes beautiful and earns its purple color in the last moments of its development because it remains open to accepting outsider atoms of copper and magnesium has inspired each one of the combination innovations developed for my project. Not only has his work inspired my project but I have led many professional development

sessions in Buffalo Public Schools since I first read his text that began with this metaphor and the question *Why be a rock when you can be an amethyst?*

Torrance, E. P. (1999). *Making the creative leap beyond*. Creative Education Foundation Press

When initially reading this text with Dr. Sue Keller Mathers I discovered the Torrance Incubation Model (TIM) and knew right away that this model was a perfect fit for my personal creativity skill set and values as a classroom educator. It forms the basis for the PEAK Planning Template that I have implemented with great success. The major components of TIM model represent what we have been lacking in education, i.e. a new way of looking at the design of education with a focus on creativity and extending the learning outside of the walls of the classroom.

Puccio, G. (2012). *Creativity rising: creative problem solving in the 21st century*. Buffalo, NY:

ICSC Press, International Center for Studies in Creativity.

Dr. Puccio's Thinking Skills Model fit perfectly as the driver of the Creative Action Plan Template that I designed as part of this master's project. Combined with several divergent and convergent thinking CPS tools such as brainwriting, SCAMPER and Stick 'em up Brainstorming, all of which I used in facilitating the creation and implementation of the Creative Action Plan (CAP) that I created with my colleague at BPS #80, the action plan that, as seen in the outcomes and appendices sections of this paper, resulted in as much a five times the percentage of growth desired by BPS on writing measures on the NYS ELA assessment.

Plattner, H. (2010). *D. school bootcamp bootleg*. Institute of Design at Stanford. Retrieved from

<http://dschool.stanford.edu/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/BootcampBootleg2010.pdf>

The D. School Bootcamp Bootleg clearly laid out for me a process of innovation as I began my work on the combination innovations described herein. Each combination innovation moved through the empathize, define, and ideate stages before our first prototypes were tested in the 6th grade classrooms at BPS #80 Highgate Heights.

Additional Pertinent Resources

Beghetto, R. A., & Kaufman, J. C. (2010). *Nurturing creativity in the classroom*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2013). *Creativity: the psychology of discovery and invention* (First Harper Perennial Modern Classics edition.). New York, NY: Harper Perennial Modern Classics.

Davis, G. A. (2004). *Creativity is forever*. (5th Ed). Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt
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Grant, J.M., Heffler, B. & Mereweather, K. (1995). *Student led conferences: Using portfolios to share learning with parents*. Pembroke Publisher: Markham, Ontario.

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Land, G. (1973). *Grow or die: The unifying principle of transformation*. New York: Random House.

Land, G., & Jarman, B. (1993). *Breakpoint and beyond: Mastering the future –today*. New York: Harper Collins.

Markman, A. (2012). *Smart thinking: three essential keys to solve problems, innovate, and get things done* (1st ed.). New York: Perigee.

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- Smith, J.K. & Smith, L.F. (2010). Educational creativity. In Kaufman, J.C. & Sternberg, R.J. (Eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of creativity*. (pp. 442-466). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Sternberg, R., & Kaufman, J. (2018). *The nature of human creativity*. Cambridge, United

Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.

Tan, S. (2013, June 17). Buffalo graduation rates sank to 47 percent in 2012: City schools erased gains made in 2011. *The Buffalo News*. Retrieved from http://www.buffalonews.com/20130617/buffalo_graduation_rates_sank_to_47_percent_in_2012.html

Torrance, E.P. (1995). *Why fly?* Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing Corporation.

Torrance, E. P. (1999). *Making the creative leap beyond*. Creative Education Foundation Press

SECTION THREE: PROJECT PROCESS PLAN

To complete the master's project, I applied the Design Thinking process as seen below in Figure 3. The four core combination innovations moved through the empathize, define, and ideate stages and I became heavily involved in producing and testing prototypes during the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 school years. More information and documentation about the outcome of our implementation of the four core combination innovations will follow below.

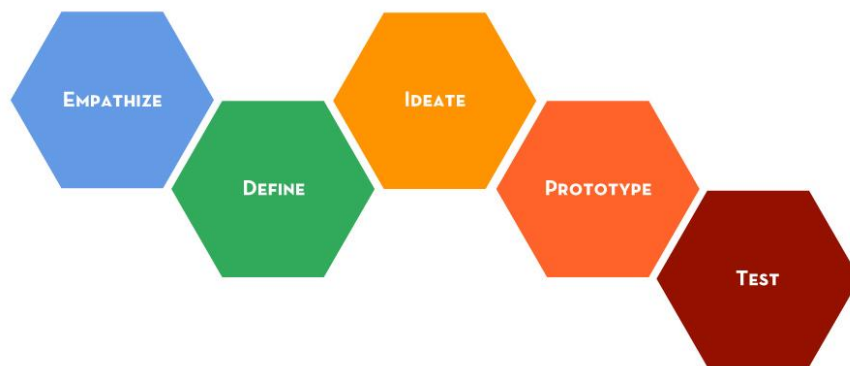


Figure 3: Design Thinking Model, Stanford Design School

Project Timeline

The seeds of this master's project started long before the semester in which I formally concluded the project. Therefore, the expanded timeline is included in this project. During this timeframe the following occurred:

Fall 2017-Fall 2019: 165 hours

- empathized, defined, ideated for the four core innovations
- completed work on prototypes
- tested current prototypes

- fully implemented the four core combination innovations
- monitored implementation at BPS#80 Highgate Heights – sixth grade

September 2019: 46 hours

- documented results of prototype testing, moved to finalization of the four core combination innovations, make improvements and adjustments
- completed sections 1-3 of master's project write up

October 2019: 52 hours

- made final edits to the four core combination innovations
- completed Sections 4-6, including appendices

November 2019: 26 hours

- completed entire master's project write up

Personal Learning Goals

- master the use of a specific set of CPS tools in an inner-city middle school setting
- become advanced at working with teams to apply CPS Tools and develop Creative Action Plans
- become an advanced user of the Torrance Incubation Model
- build a dynamic facilitation team known as Amethyst Learning Group
- present resulting four combination innovations to BPS superintendent and school board
- compile all materials as a book submission

Criteria for Evaluation

- feedback from my building principal and 6th grade teaching team
- feedback from the 6th grade students
- Student and teacher artifacts as seen in the Appendix section of this paper

- Analysis of student achievement levels on formative, summative, NYS ELA Assessment

Self-Evaluation

- Facilitator feedback forms from grade level meetings
- Personal reflection journal

SECTION FOUR: OUTCOMES

PEAK Planning Template

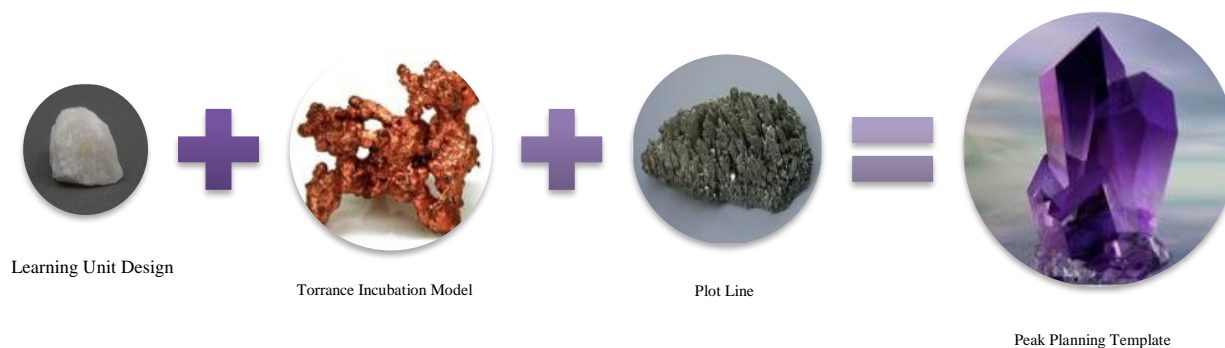


Figure 4: Rocks, Amethysts and the PEAK Planning Template

The PEAK Planning Template (APPENDIX A) replaces traditional unit design with elements of the Torrance Incubation Model and the incorporation of a basic plot structure line. The PEAK plan ensures that the teacher a) gains the learners' attention by activating prior knowledge, b) engages the learner by heightening anticipation and creating a desire to know, c) designs and facilitates scaffolded classroom action to deepen understanding and d) assesses new knowledge and extends the learning beyond the classroom. Stage one of the PEAK plan is the establishment of the PEAK performance task and mastery objective. On the plan, this section is located at the apex of the plot line to represent the climax of learning in the unit and may include statements such as *Students will construct a well-written critical analysis evaluating author Walt Whitman's effectiveness in using figurative language to convey the theme of his poem "O Captain, My Captain"*. It also asks the user to clarify how they will know students have mastered the standard, acquired new knowledge, and will apply it in the future. The answer to this question should clearly describe the summative assessment used to gauge student performance on the mastery objective. In stage two, to ensure that anticipation is heightened the

user reflects on the question *How might I gauge what connections my students already have to the skills assessed in the performance task?* This section is placed in the exposition section of the plot line as it is herein when students are introduced to the content, skills, and settings in which they will complete their work in the unit. After prior knowledge is gauged, schemata is activated and the landscape for learning is established, the teacher reflects on the questions *How might I create a desire to know?* and *How might I spark interest in the content?* The task created during this stage acts as the inciting incident of the unit wherein the main goal is revealed and any arising conflicts, such as time constraints, the need for remediation or acceleration, student motivation to achieve the goal, differentiation, and allocation of resources are worked out in a way that students are ready to begin work towards their learning goal. Stage three, the deepen understanding stage, begins with the user reflecting on the question *What might be all of the mastery lessons or workshops I can design and facilitate to deepen understanding?* This is the lengthiest stage as it serves as the rising action, or series of trials and tribulations, challenges, the application of tactics and the use of direct assistance from confidantes, i.e. friends and teachers, during several lessons, workshops and formative assessments that scaffold the skills needed to complete the PEAK performance task and demonstrate proficiency of the mastery objective. In stage four of the PEAK plan to extend the learning the user will reflect on the question *In what ways will I promote continued creative learning and engage my students long after their PEAK performance task is complete?* The user is also asked to choose one or more of the following Torrance Incubation Model strategies for extending the learning, i.e. Have a Ball, Sing in One's Own Key, Build Sandcastles, Plug in the Sun, or Shake Hands with Tomorrow.

Student Owned Analysis and Reflection (SOAR) Protocol



Figure 5: Rocks, Amethysts and the Student Owned Analysis and Reflection (SOAR) Protocol

The Student Owned Analysis and Reflection (SOAR) protocol enhances the traditional teacher centered process of deconstructing the NYS ELA assessment data report. Traditionally, 6th grade teachers at Highgate Heights received NYS ELA data reports during the fall of the consecutive year during which the test was taken. Once in receipt of the data, coaches schedule Data Driven Instruction meetings in which the data is dispersed, achievement gaps are highlighted, root cause analysis take place and action steps are created and formatted into action plans. The SOAR protocol innovation was created to increase student ownership in this process. Upon receipt of the NYS ELA assessment data, and during the month of September, I work with the sixth-grade team to create a schedule to meet with each sixth-grade student for a thirty minute one on one PPCO data conference. We sit down at the conference table with a blank PPCO Data Conference form (see Appendix B) and the individualized data report from the NYS ELA assessment. First, we search the report for pluses, or any standard area in which the student answered questions at success rate of 75% or better. Next, we search for concerns. We highlight these areas in green (see Appendix C). Then, we look for any standard area in which the student answered questions at success rate of 50% or less. We highlight these areas in red. Beginning

with the pluses, we transfer the standard number and brief description of the standard to the pluses section of the PPCO. We discuss and list in the potentials section of the PPCO any areas in which the student will potentially continue to perform to standard or above standard based on their current performance level. Then, we transfer over the concerns and list the standard number and brief description of the standards on which the student did not perform successfully. At this point we complete the conference with feedback and notes from the student about anything the student deems as relevant to their performance on the assessment. As also seen in the completed PPCO (see Appendix D) students reveal key information about the testing environment, their personal space for learning, and anything else they believe will help us with preparing small group workshop and learning experiences as the year begins. Once the pluses, potentials, concerns and student feedback sections of the conference are complete, we meet as a teaching team to design workshops specific to each tested standard and inclusive of a variety of district approved materials. We also meet with the student for a conference the next day to set an academic SMART commitment (see Appendix E) and then follow up in four weeks with an academic SMART commitment check in (see Appendix F). Completed student exemplars are also included in the appendices (see Appendix G and H).

The Creative Reader's Toolbox



Figure 6: Rocks, Amethysts and the Creative Reader's Toolbox

The Response to Intervention (RtI) process was introduced to educators in 2004 with the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). It created mandated structures and protocols to help teachers and paraprofessionals with identifying students with specific learning disabilities. Since its inception RtI programs have grown exponentially and now include a mandate that schools provide services not only for the learning disabled, but also for students who are reading below their grade level. In Buffalo Public Schools we facilitate reading and writing screeners and district benchmark assessments and combine the resulting data with NYS Assessment scores to determine which students qualify for services at specific tiers of our RtI program. In school year 2016-2017 at Highgate Heights our coaching team developed a toolbox of reading interventions to increase the achievement of students reading below grade level as determined by the aforementioned process. If a student fell below grade level or proficiency on a reading assessment or struggled with any portion of a reading assignment during class, we adjust our instruction to form small groups and one to one opportunities for additional instruction using our newly developed toolbox. Some of our favorite strategies in the toolbox were *Click or Clunk?*, main idea maps, plot diagraming, and story grammar. They worked great and our students benefitted from our help with these interventions. However, we all agreed that moving forward into school year 2017-2018 we would develop further RtI strategies that focused primarily on right brain functioning. During our conversation I reached over to my bookshelf and pulled from the stacks *Your Tool Cards: An innovation Catalyst*. I showed my colleagues the pages dedicated to the clarifying tools Storyboarding and Mind Mapping. I informed our team that I was working on my master's project and was going to create a new set of innovative creative interventions for our toolbox. The new interventions were created and included in our

new version of strategies that we called The Creative Reader's toolbox (see Appendix I). We now storyboard and mind map regularly in ELA classes at Highgate Heights. The storyboarding activity, or what we call Mental Imagery Storyboards, has become an invaluable RtI activity for our students in their quest to better comprehend text (see Appendix J). We also use the mind mapping intervention throughout the disciplines (see Appendix K).

Creative Action Plan (CAP)

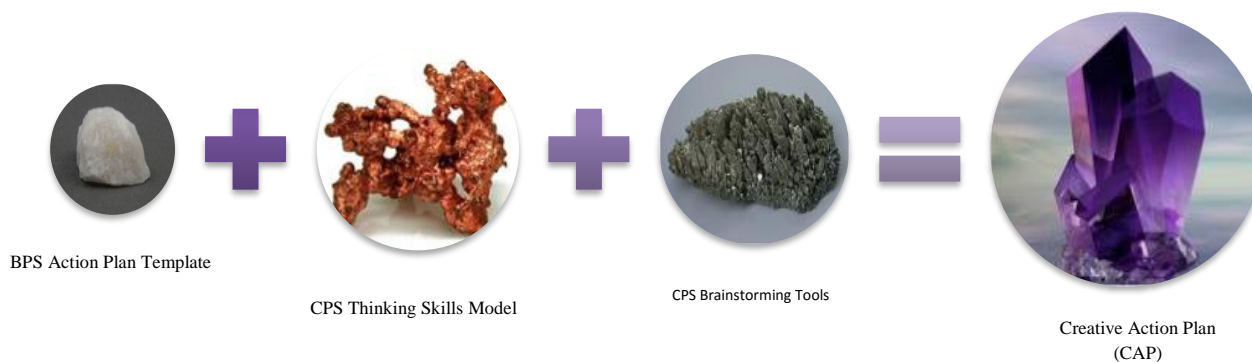


Figure 7: Rocks, Amethysts and the Creative Action Plan

The Creative Action Plan (CAP) (See Appendix L) enhances the traditional action plan template by combining the CPS Thinking Skills Model with CPS Brainstorming Tools with original action plan template columns such as action steps, completed by, collaborating with, by when and evidence of completion. To increase student proficiency on short response writing, the CAP was implemented by our ELA team at Highgate Heights. As seen in the plan in the completed Short Constructed Response CAP (See Appendix M) we began in phase one by assessing the situation to find and highlight achievement gaps in the NYS ELA assessment data in terms of short responses. We also gave a baseline assessment to get a more current assessment of the situation. We moved into phase two, explored the vision for proficiency and reached

consensus in our grade level meeting that it would be great if we increased proficiency on short responses on the NYS ELA assessment by 20%. From there we entered phase three and began to formulate challenges for short response writing. We agreed that it would be great if our 6th grade students began their answer by restating the question, answered the question by making a claim, stated one piece of relevant evidence to support their claim, stated a second piece of relevant evidence to support their claim, and wrapped up their answer with a concluding statement that restated their answer. At the next meeting we entered phase four and used divergent and convergent thinking tools to brainstorm and select ideas for our new writing structure. Before the meeting was over, we created our new structure for short written responses. We moved forward with the acronym RASSC, or restate, answer, support, support, conclude (See Appendix N). Our data sets were fully analyzed, our gaps were highlighted, and our new writing structure acronym was ready for phase five wherein we began to formulate solutions and create short and long-term action steps. Before we moved into the final phase of our plan, I met with school principal Mrs. Gayle-Irving-White to review our initial list of brainstormed action steps to ensure that our plan was in line with district and school-based initiatives. With the go ahead from our principal, we entered phase seven and formulated our final actions steps to implement RASSC as our new structure for writing short constructed responses. The 6th grade team and I drove the implementation of action steps and began to realize in just a few weeks that our plan was working. Overall, as seen in the data displayed in the process outcomes section below, we moved more than 20% of each of our two cohorts to proficiency! Our CAP worked!

Product Outcomes

PEAK Planning Template

PEAK PLAN FOR LEARNING

- Get the student's attention by activating **Prior Knowledge**
- Engage the learner by sequencing anticipation and creating desire to know
- Design and facilitate scaffolded **Action** to deepen understanding
- Assess new **Knowledge** and extend the learning

Grade: _____
Subject: _____
Date: _____

Scaffolded Action:
 What might be all of the mastery lessons or workshops I can design and facilitate to deepen understanding? How might I incorporate Torrance's Creativity Skills?

Engagement:
 How might I create a desire to know?
 How might I spark interest in the content?

2 HEIGHTEN ANTICIPATION
Prior knowledge:
 How might I gauge what connections my students already have to the skills assessed in the PEAK performance task?

3 DEEPEN UNDERSTANDING

PEAK START HERE 1
PEAK Performance Task: _____

Mastery Objective: _____

Assess Knowledge:
 How will I know my students have mastered the standard, acquired new knowledge, and will apply it in the future?

4 EXTEND THE LEARNING
 To promote continued creative learning and engage my students long after their **PEAK** performance task is complete, my students will:

Have a Ball:
 Sing in One's Own Key:
 Build Sympathies:
 Plug in the Sun:
 Shake Hands with Tomorrow:
 *** (Use TIM Integrating Content Poster for assistance with planning)

Resources/Notes:

SPARK!

Collect and Connect Ready-to-use

***This planning template was designed by the Amethyst Learning Group Inc. It is based primarily on the Torrance Foundation Model for Learning and interprets a common place line. It is designed specifically for teachers faced with the challenge of "Rocky Road" from classroom performance tasks as well as state and local measures of assessment.

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Student Owned Analysis and Reflection (SOAR) Protocol Artifacts

PPCO – NYS ELA Conference – 2019		
Student:	Conference Leader:	Date:
NYS ELA Level:	Numeric Score:	Next Level Pts.:
PLUSES (You did excellent on...)		
POTENTIALS (This might lead to...)		
CONCERNS (How to...)		
OVERCOMING CONCERNS (Next action steps are...)		
STUDENT FEEDBACK/NOTES:		

NOTE: PPCo sourced from *Vehar, J., Firestien, R., & Miller, B. (1997). Creativity unbound: an introduction to creative problem solving . Williamsville, NY: Innovation Systems Group.*

S.M.A.R.T. Commitment #1: NAME: _____ DATE: _____ ADVISOR: _____				
My ACADEMIC commitment is to...				
SPECIFIC : Describe your commitment in a few more sentences.	MEASUREABLE : How will you know when you have fulfilled your commitment?	ATTAINABLE : What are <i>THREE</i> things that you <u>must do</u> to fulfill your commitment?	RELEVANT : How will fulfilling your commitment help you in the future?	TIME BASED: By when do you want to fulfill your commitment ?
RESISTORS: Who or what may stop you from fulfilling your commitment?		MY START DATE:	ASSISTORS: Who or what is going to help you complete your commitment?	
<i>"Real integrity is doing the right thing, knowing that nobody's going to know whether you did it or not." -Oprah Winfrey</i>				

NAME:
DATE:

Did I put in effort and grit?
Things I've already done to achieve my commitment:

Have I seen small changes?
Proof that my effort and grit is working:

What ASSISTORS have helped me so far? (I'll use more of these.)

What RESISTORS have hindered my progress? (I'll watch out for these.)

SMART COMMITMENT CHECK-IN

My SMART commitment:

1.

2.

3.

1.


2.

3.

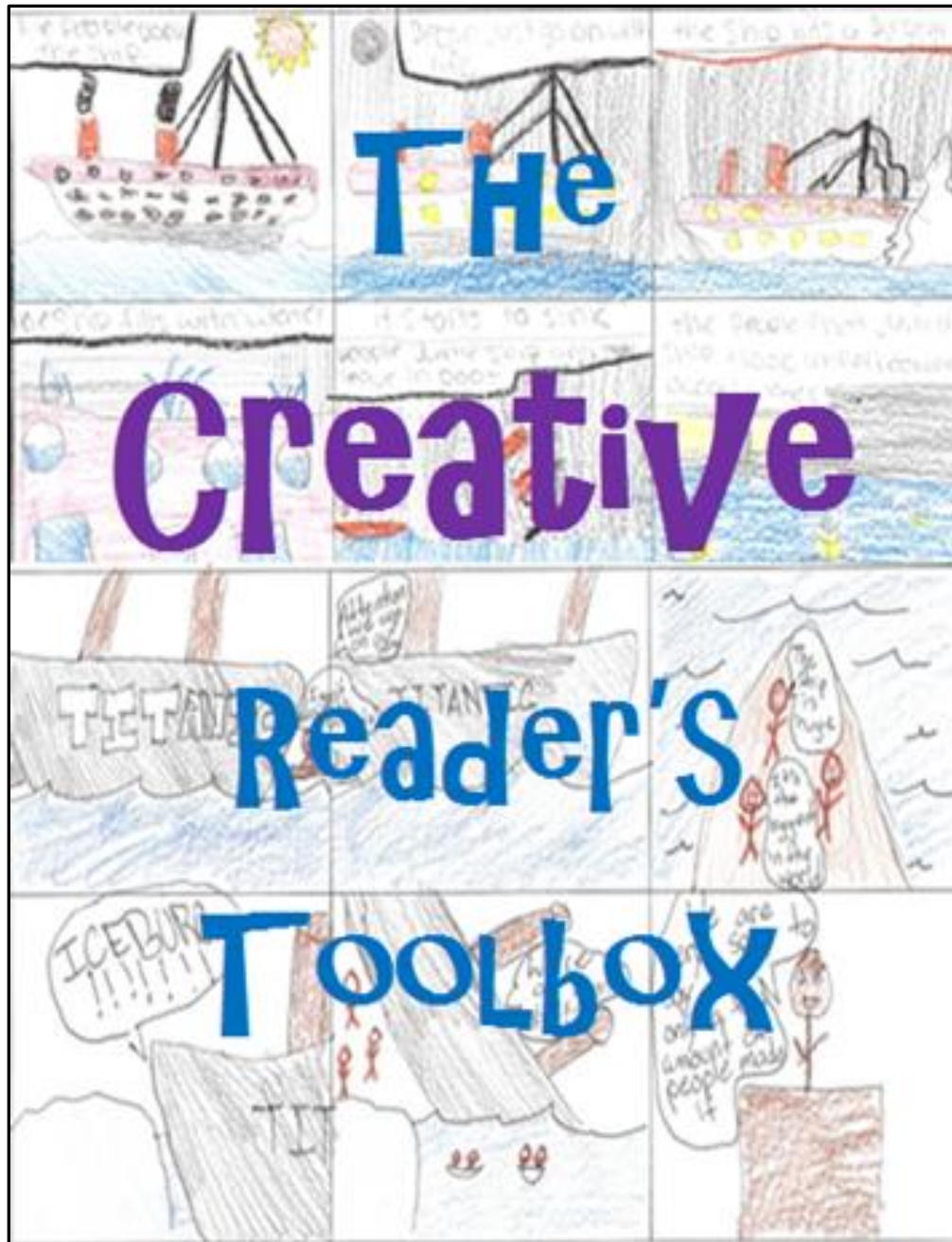
My target date:

GRIT= determination and courage to continue doing something even though it is very difficult

"Grit is passion and perseverance for very long-term goals. Grit is having stamina. Grit is sticking with your future, day-in, day-out. Not just for the week, not just for the month, but for years. And working really hard to make that future a reality." -Dr. Angela Lee Duckworth



The Creative Reader's Toolbox



Prior Knowledge Mind Map

PRIOR KNOWLEDGE-

all of the information that you already know about a given reading topic.

Activity: “PK Mind Map”

Did you know?

Personal connections help with comprehension! A great way to increase your understanding of a passage is to connect new information to something you already know or learned. One way to connect prior knowledge to a new reading passage is to make a “PK Mind Map.”

Steps to create a “PK Mind Map” :

- 1) Review the student sample mind map for succulent plants (located on the Tool Box Board).
- 2) In the middle of the white paper, write a major concept from the new passage you are about to read.
- 3) Now think of other words or memories that you are reminded of when you think of the concept.
- 4) Write each memory in a different spot on your paper so they are surrounding the concept. Draw a line to each word or memory, connecting it to the concept.
- 5) Now list any words or memories that you associate with the first words you wrote.
- 6) Continue the process until everything you know about the major concept is listed in a grouping on your paper.

HINT: Don’ t be afraid to draw pictures to go along with the words. Pictures help!

- 7) Color and decorate your mind map accordingly. Remember, everything on your mind map must relate to the major concept in some way.

MATERIALS:

1. copy of the reading passage
2. piece of white construction paper
3. pencil
4. color pencils or markers

NYS Standard:

RL.7.11

RI.7.9.a

I Can...

...recall my prior experiences in my own life to help me to better understand the content of what I am reading!

...use my experience and knowledge to think analytically, address problems creatively, and advocate persuasively!

References:

Buzan, T., Buzan, B., & Harrison, J. (2010). *The Mind map book: unlock your creativity, boost your memory, change your life* (1st ed.). New York, NY: Pearson BBC Active.

González, D. (2002). *When we peek behind the curtain: highlighting the essence of creativity methodologies: creative problem solving (CPS), Edward de Bono, mind mapping, synectics, TRIZ*. Evanston, Ill: THinc Communications.

MENTAL IMAGERY STORYBOARD

MENTAL IMAGERY-

the "mental pictures" that readers experience while reading a passage of literature.

Activity: MI Storyboard

Did you know?

By constructing "mental pictures" of what you are reading, drawing these pictures as you read, and closely studying any text illustrations, you can increase your reading comprehension skills almost instantly! Try it out! Make an MI Storyboard by following the steps listed below.

Steps to complete a MI Storyboard:

- 1) Complete a first reading of the story.
- 2) Write your name and the title of the story on the blank MI Storyboard template.
- 3) Read the story again. This time, stop at several points where you think the author provided you with the most vivid mental images. Starting at box #1, draw these images in the order they occur in the story.

HINT: To make your MI Storyboard accurate and entertaining, be sure to include a series of images from the story's beginning, middle, and end.

- 4) When you have completed the MI Storyboard, skim the story to be sure you have included images from the beginning, middle, and end.

References:

Love, B. (2014). Urban Storytelling: How Storyboarding, Moviemaking, and Hip-Hop-Based Education Can Promote Students' Critical Voice. *English Journal*, 103(5), 53–58. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1523923443/>

Lillyman, S., & Bennett, C. (2012). Using storyboarding to gain appreciative reflection in the classroom. *Reflective Practice*, 13(4), 533–539. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14623943.2012.670621>

MATERIALS:

1. copy of the reading passage
2. blank [MI Storyboard Template](#)
3. pencil
4. color pencils and markers


NYS CCR Standard:

RL.7.4

I Can...

...analyze the impact of imagery in a particular piece of writing!

Creative Action Plan (CAP) Template

<h1 style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">CREATIVE ACTION PLAN (CAP)</h1> <h2 style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Highgate Heights BPS#80</h2> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 10px 0;">TOPIC:</p> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 10px 0;">IMPLEMENTATION DATE:</p> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 10px 0;">DURATION:</p> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 10px 0;">FACILITATORS:</p>	<p>Process Map:</p>  <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;"><i>Creative Leadership: Skills That Drive Change</i> Puccio, Murdock, & Mance (2007)</p>			
<h2 style="margin: 0;">PHASE #1: Assessing the Situation</h2> <p style="margin: 10px 0;">Team goal: To complete a thorough examination of the current situation</p>				
Action Steps:	Completed by:	Collaborating with:	By when:	Evidence of completion:
<h2 style="margin: 0;">PHASE #2: Exploring the Vision</h2> <p style="margin: 10px 0;">Team Goal: To identify goals, wishes, or challenges</p> <p style="margin: 10px 0;">IWBGI...</p>				
Action Steps:	Completed by:	Collaborating with:	By when:	Evidence of completion:

<p align="center">PHASE #3: Formulating Challenges</p> <p align="center">Team goal: To reach consensus around the most pressing challenge</p> <p>IWBGI...</p>				
Action Steps:	Completed by:	Collaborating with:	By when:	Evidence of completion:
<p align="center">PHASE #4: Exploring Ideas</p> <p align="center">Team goal: To brainstorm a list of possible solutions.</p>				
Action Steps:	Completed by:	Collaborating with:	By when:	Evidence of completion:
<p align="center">PHASE #5: Formulating Solutions</p> <p align="center">Team goal: To reach consensus on short- and long-term action steps</p>				
Action Steps:	Completed by:	Collaborating with:	By when:	Evidence of completion:
<p align="center">PHASE #6: Exploring Acceptance</p> <p align="center">Team goal: To ensure alignment with school, district and state initiatives</p>				

Action Steps:	Completed by:	Collaborating with:	By when:	Evidence of completion:
<p style="text-align: center;">PHASE #7: Formulating a Plan</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Team goal: To develop and implement a plan, observe, modify and adjust as needed</p>				
Action Steps:	Completed by:	Collaborating with:	By when:	Evidence of completion:

Process Outcomes

The core innovations were fully implemented with two cohorts of sixth grade students at Buffalo Public School #80 Highgate Heights. We began with cohort one during school year 2017-2018 and continued with cohort two during school year 2018-2019. Sixth grade classroom teacher Mrs. Shelli-Payne Patterson and I co-implemented and continuously monitored effectiveness of the core innovations in terms of increasing student achievement in English language arts. As seen below in Figure 8, we faced a very pressing challenge as Mrs. Payne-Patterson inherited both fifth-grade cohorts with single digit proficiency.

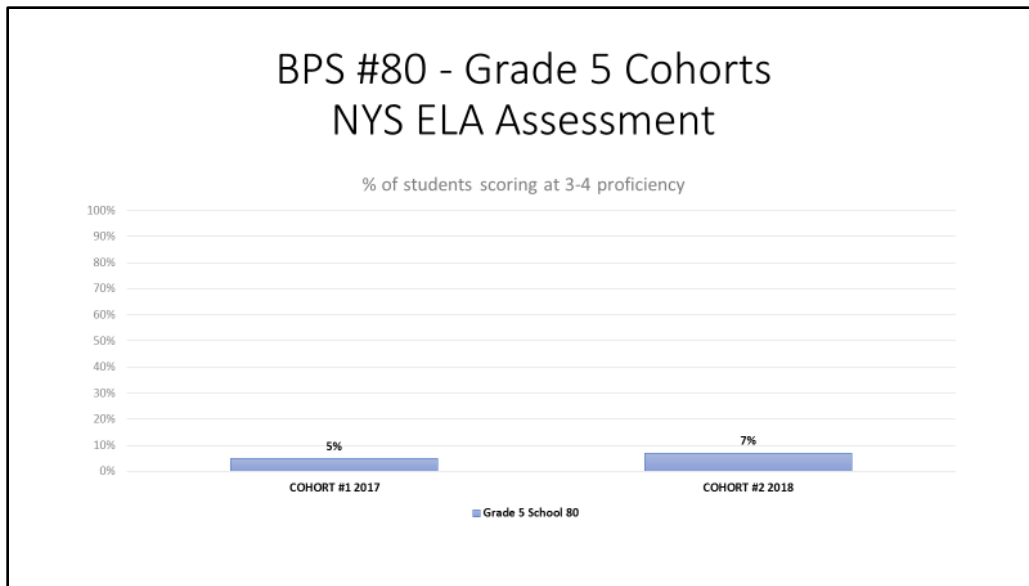


Figure 8: Grade 5 Cohorts NYS ELA Assessment Data 2017 and 2018

Moreover, as seen below in Figure 9, both fifth-grade cohorts achieved significantly lower than their fifth-grade peers in the Buffalo Public School district and districts across New York State.

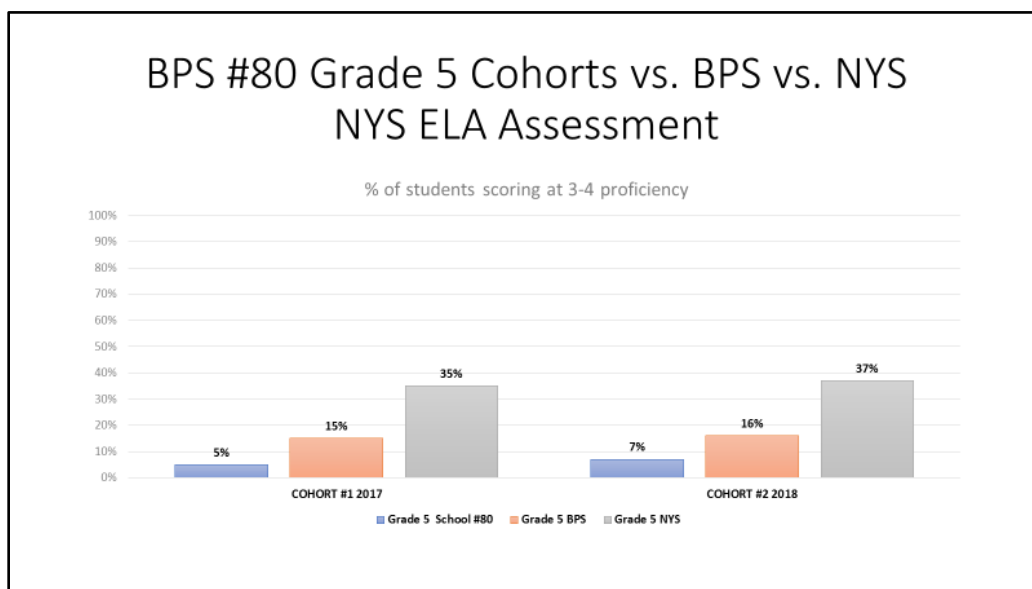


Figure 9: Grade 5 Cohorts NYS ELA Assessment Data vs. BPS vs. NYS

When I sat down with Mrs. Payne-Patterson for a planning meeting over the summer before school year 2017-2018, we reviewed the few pluses, various potentials and overwhelming concerns we uncovered in our deep dive into the NYS ELA Assessment data. We both agreed that, in order to overcome the concern of lack of achievement and growth, we must innovate. I explained to her that I was working on my master's project and would like to team up with her to implement the four combination innovations described herein. She agreed, accepted the challenge and we went to work. Two years later, sitting at my desk writing the outcomes section of my project, I am pleased to say that, with the implementation of the four innovations, we significantly increased the achievement of cohort one and cohort two. As seen below in Figure 10, our students made significant gains in terms of proficiency on the NYS ELA Assessment.

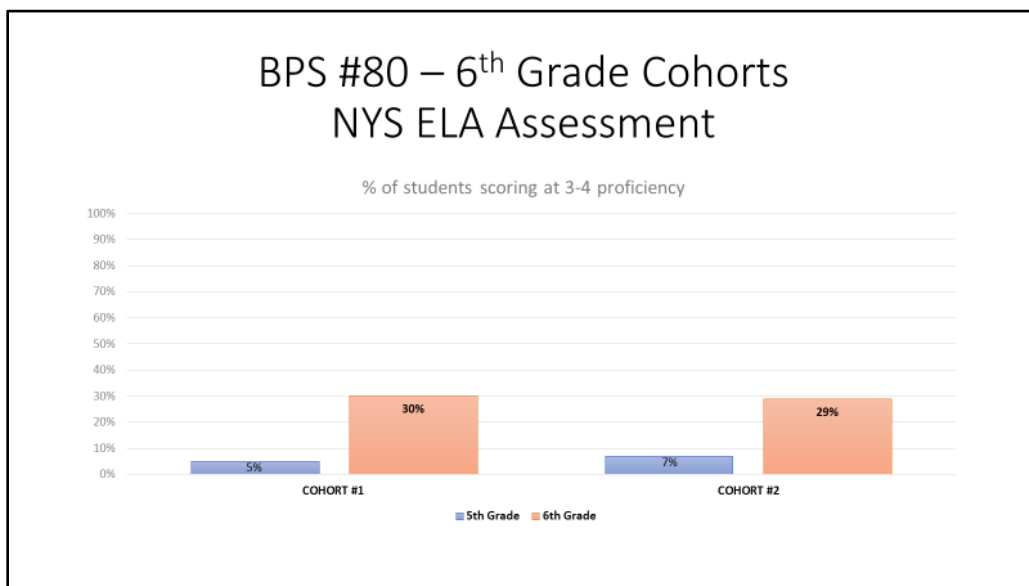


Figure 10: Grade 6 Cohorts NYS ELA Assessment Data – Growth Analysis

Moreover, as seen below in Figure 11, both cohorts of students outperformed their peers in the Buffalo Public School district and closed the gap between their peers in districts across New York State.

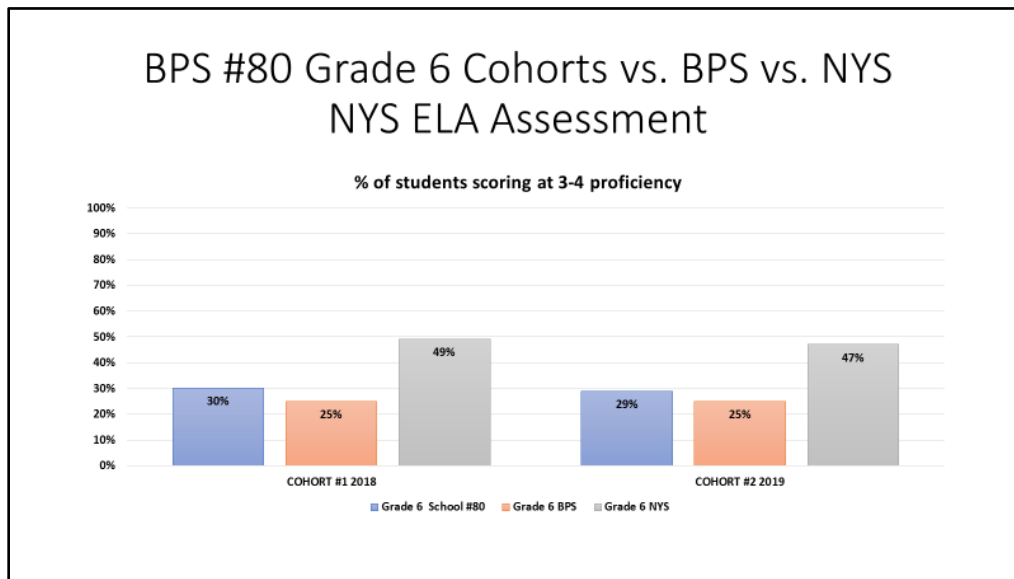


Figure 11: Grade 6 Cohorts NYS ELA Assessment Data vs. BPS vs. NYS

As seen in the data charts, the achievement rates on the NYS ELA Assessment of both cohorts of students have greatly exceed the 4% expected growth rate as set by the Buffalo Public School's Office of Data and Shared Accountability. In fact, cohort one grew at a rate five times greater than expected and cohort two grew at a rate four times greater than expected.

Over the past two years, upon the release of the York State Education Department (NYSED) student score reports from the ELA Assessment, Mrs. Payne Patterson and I deconstructed the data to determine in which areas our students showed the most improvement. We are pleased to say that the area of greatest improvement has been short responses. This is significant in relation to my master's project as one of the four combination innovations, i.e. the Creative Action Plan (CAP) for short response, was the key driver of this success. As seen below in Figures 12 and 13 in cohort one the amount of proficient responses scoring at a level two increased 25%, up from 15% in 2017 in grade five to 45% in 2018 in grade six. A total of 95 short responses received full credit in 2018 in grade six as compared to a total of 42 short

responses that received full credit in 2017 in grade five. Moreover, in 2018 in grade six 95% of responses received partial or full credit in comparison to 2017 in grade five when 61% of responses received partial or full credit.

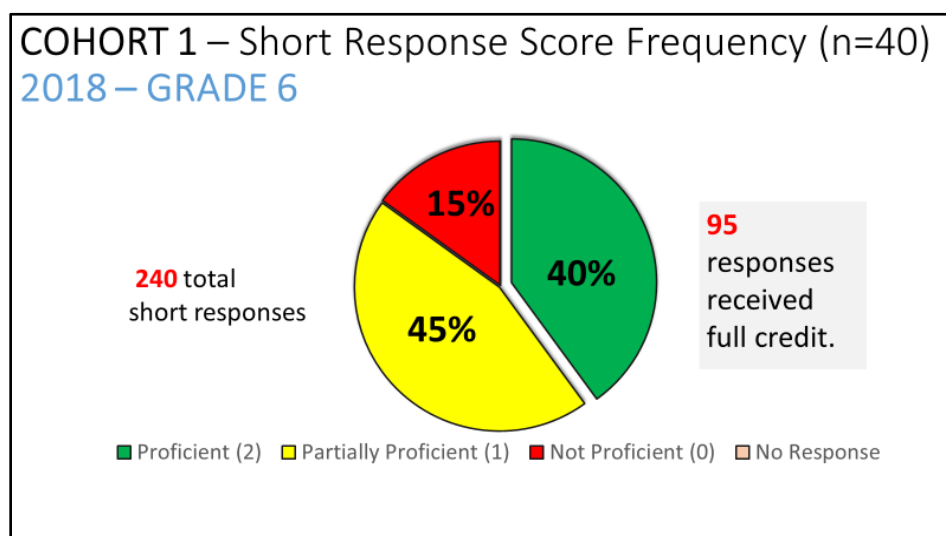


Figure 12: 2018 Grade 6 Cohort 1 NYS ELA Assessment Data – Short Response

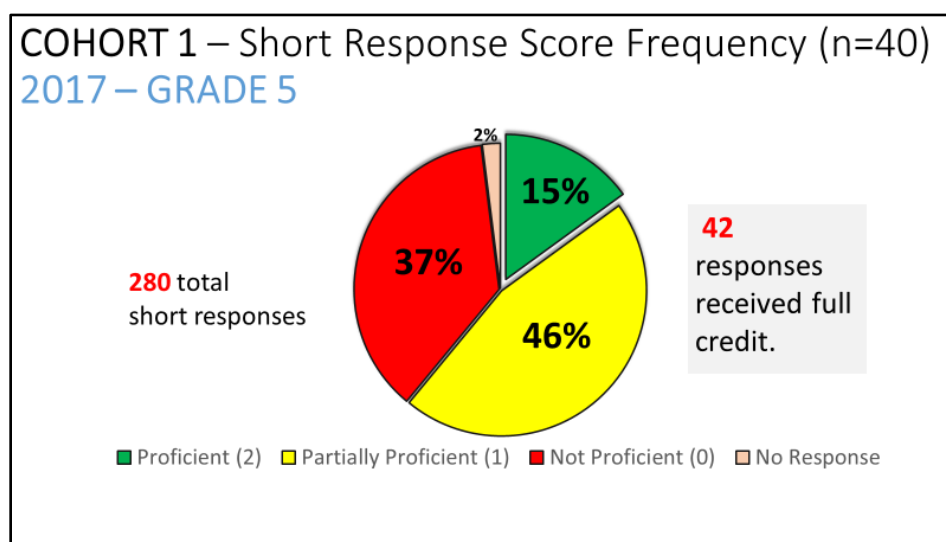


Figure 13: 2017 Grade 6 Cohort 1 NYS ELA Assessment Data – Short Response

As seen below in Figures 14 and 15 in cohort two the amount of proficient responses scoring at a level two increased 46%, up from 3% in 2018 in grade five to 49% in 2019 in grade six. A total of 133 short responses received full credit in 2019 in grade six as compared to a total of seven short responses that received full credit in 2018 in grade five. Moreover, in 2019 in grade six 90% of responses received partial or full credit in comparison to 2018 in grade five when 65% of responses received partial or full credit.

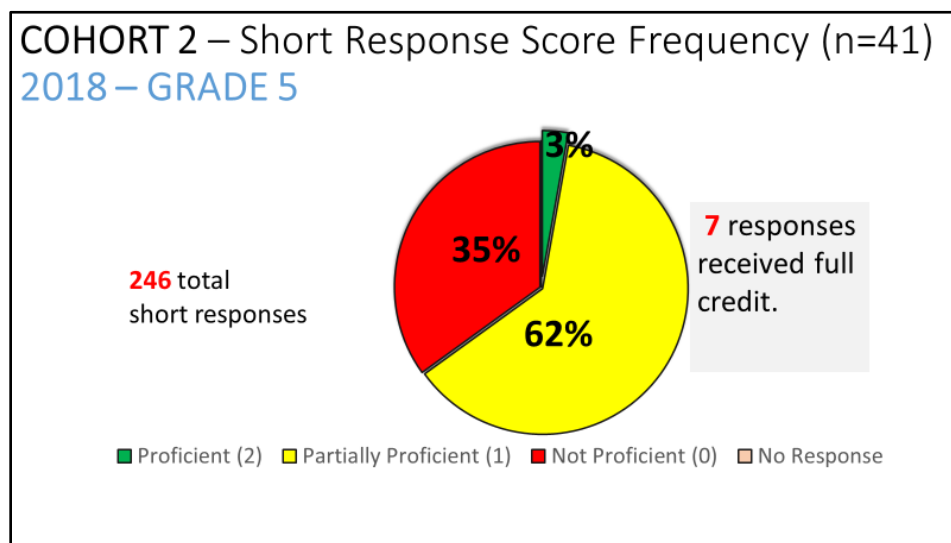


Figure 14: 2018 Grade 6 Cohort 2 NYS ELA Assessment Data – Short Response

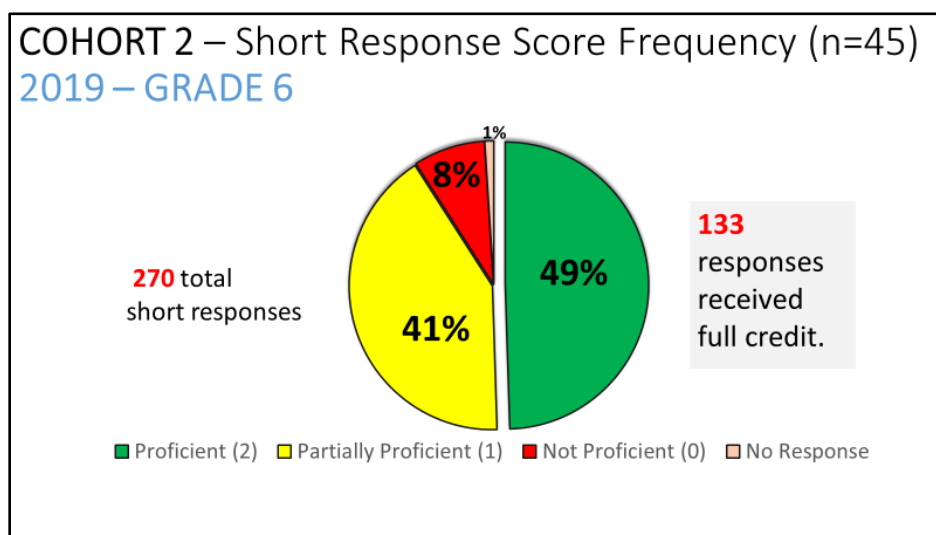


Figure 15: 2019 Grade 6 Cohort 2 NYS ELA Assessment Data – Short Response

SECTION FIVE: KEY LEARNINGS

During the prototype phase of my project I was concerned that when I presented the final version of the PEAK Planning Template to the 6th grade teaching team, the first prototype with which I approached the team, and specifically lead ELA teacher Mrs. Shelli Payne-Patterson, it wouldn't be an easy sell for implementation. I saw the vision and value of the combination innovation resulting from enhancing the common plot line with the Torrance Incubation Model to create a visual of the mastery objective assessed in the PEAK performance task as the ultimate learning climax of the unit. It was my creative vision, one not seen before by any of the team members, and a vision that clearly reflected my thinking as a right brain ideator. I knew the team would embrace my ideas and help me implement the template, but I thought that they would join me because I was their instructional coach, not because they believed in the power of something new and creative to guide their instructional planning. I was wrong. In fact, I learned on the first day that highly affective teachers recognize the need for creativity in our schools in every aspect of the day. I learned that highly affective teachers recognize the need to change the way we see the path of learning and are more than willing and ready to use new and innovative means to help their student's achievement more in the classroom. The day after I presented the model, Mrs. Payne-Patterson presented me with her first completed PEAK Planning Template and our journey began (see Appendix O).

Over the course of my project I also learned that students benefit greatly when they are included in the conversation about data and given the opportunity to set and monitor their own achievement goals. The Student Owned Analysis and Reflection (SOAR) protocol has become a tradition in the 6th grade classroom at Highgate Heights. Students are very eager to return to the conference table and look forward to completing the SMART commitment setting and check-in

activities. Acronyms like PPCO and SOAR, as well as key words such as assistors and resistors, are now part of our everyday vocabulary. This has taught me that, when given the chance to take a leading role in their own education, the children at my school are eager to do so.

In regard to implementing the short response Creative Action Plan with Mrs. Shelli Payne-Patterson and the sixth-grade students I learned how effective a set of action steps can be when they are focused on the right challenge. During our initial meetings when we were assessing the situation and exploring the vision, we examined all available released questions from the NYS ELA assessments. We unpacked each question and created clusters grouped by standards and found that there was no single cluster on which our cohorts were performing significantly more poorly than the other. Our team felt overwhelmed at first faced with the reality that our students needed additional support with many if not all standards tested on the assessment. That's when we dug a little deeper. Through closer examination of the assessment data, test question types and standards tested we centered on what we felt was the most important challenge. We agreed that any action plan we created should include a strong focus on making claims about a text and supporting said claims with relevant and sufficient textual evidence, a skill clearly outline by ELA Common Core standard number one. The data and our gut feelings told us that we should focus on short response writing, as this offered us a chance to create a new writing structure and the opportunity for our students to practice repeatedly throughout our lessons, as opposed to extended responses which were more time consuming but included the same skill set it takes to complete a short response. We were right. As the data proves, we learned that we clearly found the right challenge and, as a result, the action steps we created, implemented and monitored resulted in growth and proficiency rates that more than doubled

those of sixth graders at schools with like populations both in the Buffalo and across New York State.

SECTION SIX: CONCLUSION

I have already begun building on the project by expanding the scope of the innovations to include the 7th and 8th grade classrooms. As these classrooms contain students who experienced the four core innovations, I am currently implement bits and pieces into their curriculum. There are a few work arounds, however, that make it a bit more challenging. The scheduling for the 7th and 8th grade classes is quite different from that of the 6th grade classrooms, i.e. they meet only once per day for forty-five minute periods as opposed to ninety-minute blocks in 6th grade. Moreover, the 7th and 8th grade ELA teacher has been far less receptive to including anything in the curriculum that isn't strictly approved by our district. She has remarked on many occasions so far this year that she is sticking by the book in the event that her supervisor visits for an observation. This year in BPS the department supervisors and coordinators have been focusing heavily on teachers' implementation of district materials with fidelity, so I find myself in the position of having to prove that we are implementing with fidelity, just with a little boost from the world of creativity. I presented to her the 6th grade data and she is growing fonder of using the four combination innovations in her classroom as time allows.

Moreover, I would also like to reinstate the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) assessments in 6th grade moving forward to gauge growth on a more regular basis, especially in concerns to the four combination innovations. We aggregate and analyze state assessment data, formative and summative unit assessment data, but we stop giving the DIBELS assessment in 5th grade even though we have the capacity to continue it in 6th grade. I will be meeting with the reading teacher to plan out a DIBELS schedule for 6th grade this year. The resulting data will give me a deeper look at how, for instance, the Creative Reader's Toolbox is improving not just comprehension of text but identifying students at different levels

of risk in concerns to a variety of skills such as letter-naming fluency, phonemic segmentation fluency, nonsense word fluency, and word reading fluency. One of my most important next steps is to study the DIBELS program and discover a link between my project and the DIBLES measures

I also plan on sharing the outcomes of my project and the four combination innovations with several associate superintendents in BPS with whom I am acquainted in hopes of finally reaching Dr. Kriner Cash. The data gains we have experienced in 6th grade are significant. So significant, in fact, that last year the district moved back to the Journeys reading program in 6th grade but, due to our great increases in achievement on the ELA assessment, Mrs. Payne-Patterson and I have been given special permission by the associate superintendent responsible for our community school cluster to continue doing exactly what we have been doing. It is my sincere hope that we are going to be able to begin expanding with two innovations, the Student Owned Analysis and Reflection (SOAR) protocol and Creative Reader's Toolbox, in other 6th grade classrooms in our cluster, beginning with Westminster Charter School.

I recently earned New York State certification as a school building leader (SBL) and will be applying for various positions throughout Western New York this Spring. Therefore, there is also a good chance that I will be leaving BPS and starting fresh in a new position in a new district. If that happens, I will undoubtedly bring the four combination innovations with me and do my best to implement as much as a possible in my new building.

Lastly, as mentioned in this paper, I am in the beginning stages of forming an educational consulting firm known as Amethyst Learning Group (ALG). It is also my sincere hope that I will find the time and space this summer to compile my master's project, together with anecdotes, lesson examples and learning artifacts from the past fifteen years of teaching into a creative

education methods text. With the publishing of my text, the formation of ALG, and my status as the only current school building leader in Western New York with the MSc in Creativity and Change Leadership, I see a bright future for my all important work as a creative education leader who is always ready and willing to go anywhere to turn rocks into amethyst for the sake of the children in our classrooms and the teachers who guide their learning.

Appendix A

PEAK PLAN FOR LEARNING

- Get the student's immediately activating **P**rior knowledge
- Engage the learner by sequencing anticipation and creating a desire to learn
- Design and facilitate activities **A**iming to deepen understanding
- Assess new **K**nowledge and extend the learning

Grade: _____
Subject: _____
Date: _____

Scaffolded Action:
What might be all of the mastery/lessons or workshops I can design and facilitate to deepen understanding? How might I incorporate Torrance's Creativity Skills?

PEAK START HERE 1
PEAK Performance Task: _____
Mastery Objective: _____

Assess Knowledge:
How will I know my students have mastered the standard, acquired new knowledge, and will apply it in the future?

3 DEEPEN UNDERSTANDING

4 EXTEND THE LEARNING
To promote continued creative learning and engage my students long after their **PEAK** performance task is complete, my students will:

Have a Ball:
Sing in One's Own Key:
Build Sockcastles:
Plug in the Sun:
Shake Hands with Tomorrow:

2 HEIGHTEN ANTICIPATION
Prior knowledge:
How might I gauge what connections my students already have to the skills assessed in the **PEAK** performance task?

Engagement:
How might I create a desire to know?
How might I spark interest in the content?

Resources/Notes:

***This planning template was designed by the Amethyst Learning Group Inc. It is based primarily on the Torrance Incubation Model for Learning and Interpretation a common place that it is designed specifically for teachers faced with the challenge of "differentiation" from classroom performance tasks as well as state and local measures of assessment.

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Appendix B

PPCO – NYS ELA Conference – 2019	
Student:	Conference Leader: Date:
NYS ELA Level:	Numeric Score: Next Level Pts.:
PLUSES (You did excellent on...)	
POTENTIALS (This might lead to...)	
CONCERNS (How to...)	
OVERCOMING CONCERNS (Next action steps are...)	
STUDENT FEEDBACK/NOTES:	

Appendix C

Individual Student Performance Report by Subskill - MC

This report is organized and grouped by learning standard and shows the number and percent of multiple choice questions the student answered correctly as well as the points awarded for constructed response questions. The constructed response section also indicates the percentage of questions for which the student was awarded full credit. If a comparison group's performance is included, that group's average percentages of the same measures are indicated.

District Name: Buffalo School Year: 2017 Student: [Redacted]		Location: Highgate Heights Test: Grade 5 ELA Numeric Score: 279 State Percentile: 85		Level: Level 3 + 15 pt to Level 2	
Multiple Choice Analysis					
Strand: Language	Cluster: Vocabulary Acquisition and Use	Number of Questions	Student # Correct	Student % Correct	District % Correct
L.5.4 Interpret figurative language, including similes and metaphors, in context		1	1	100%	53%
L.5.5b Recognize and explain the meaning of common idioms, adages, and proverbs		1	0	0%	36%
Strand: Reading-Informational Text					
Cluster: Craft and Structure					
RI.5.4 Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 5 topic or subject area.		1	1	100%	40%
RI.5.5 Compare and contrast the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in two or more texts.		2	1	50%	46%
Cluster: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas					
RI.5.7 Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.		1	0	0%	48%
RI.5.8 Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text, identifying which reasons and evidence support which point(s).		3	0	0%	35%
Cluster: Key Ideas and Details					
RI.5.1 Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.		5	3	60%	52%
RI.5.2 Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.		3	2	67%	51%
RI.5.3 Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text.		4	3	75%	41%

Appendix D

PPCO – NYS ELA Conference – 2019		
Student: Martavia B.	Conference Leader: MR. HALL	Date: 9/19
NYS ELA Level: 1	Numeric Score: 275	Next Level Pts.: 19
PLUSES (You did excellent on...)	<u>MC</u> RI5.4 – determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words RI5.1—quote accurately from the text RL5.5 – explain how a series of chapters, scenes, stanzas fit together to provide a whole RL5.1 – quote accurately from the text when making inferences	
POTENTIALS (This might lead to...)	Level 2/3 on NYS ELA 2018 All 2s on short responses 2s or 3s on extended responses	
CONCERNS (How to...)	<u>MC</u> L.5.5a – interpret figurative language L5.5b – recognize and explain the meaning of common idioms, adages, proverbs RI5.2 – determine two or more main ideas RL5.6 – how a narrator’s POV influences events described RL5.7 – how visual and multimedia elements contribute to meaning, tone, etc. RL5.2 – determine a theme <u>ER</u> RL5.2 – determine a theme RI5.9 – integrate info from several texts on the same topic	
OVERCOMING CONCERNS (Next action steps are...)	Small Group Instruction: 1. theme topic/thematic statement workshop 10-2-19 2. RASSC bootcamp – 10-4-19 3. Main idea/supporting details w/ Mrs. Beathley’s group Tue./Thurs. starting 10-9-19 Progress monitor during DBAs and mid and end unit assessments.	
STUDENT FEEDBACK/NOTES:	-Martavia states that the teacher was out so long, everyone was getting in fights and stuff, Mr. Marshall wasn’t teaching it right -exam room there were distractions -Martavia says she needs help with structuring and writing constructed (4) responses/claims -Martavia has a room with a desk at home where she does her homework -Martavia’s mother, Mrs. Gibbs, helps her with her homework	

Appendix E

S.M.A.R.T. Commitment #1: NAME: _____ ADVISOR: _____ DATE: _____				
My ACADEMIC commitment is to...				
SPECIFIC : Describe your commitment in a few more sentences.	MEASUREABLE : How will you know when you have fulfilled your commitment?	ATTAINABLE : What are <i>THREE</i> things that you <u>must do</u> to fulfill your commitment?	RELEVANT : How will fulfilling your commitment help you in the future?	TIME BASED: By when do you want to fulfill your commitment? ?
RESISTERS: Who or what may stop you from fulfilling your commitment?		MY START DATE:	ASSISTORS: Who or what is going to help you complete your commitment?	
<i>“Real integrity is doing the right thing, knowing that nobody's going to know whether you did it or not.” -Oprah Winfrey</i>				

Appendix F

NAME:
DATE:

My SMART commitment:

Did I put in effort and grit?
Things I've already done to achieve my commitment:

Have I seen small changes?
Proof that my effort and grit is working:

What ASSISTORS
have helped me so far? (I'll use more of these.)


What RESISTORS
have hindered my progress? (I'll watch out for these.)

SMART COMMITMENT CHECK-IN

My target date:

GRIT= determination and courage to continue doing something even though it is very difficult

"Grit is passion and perseverance for very long-term goals. Grit is having stamina. Grit is sticking with your future, day-in, day-out. Not just for the week, not just for the month, but for years. And working really hard to make that future a reality." -Dr. Angela Lee Duckworth



Appendix G

<h2 style="text-align: center;">S.M.A.R.T. Commitment #1:</h2>				
NAME: Martavia B		ADVISOR: Mr. Hall		DATE: 9-20-19
<p>My ACADEMIC commitment is to...<i>improve on my short responses so I score all 2s on short responses on my NYE ELA assessment.</i></p>				
SPECIFIC : Describe your commitment in a few more sentences. I have to do a better job using RASSC+ so I include two RELEVANT textual details when I answer short response questions.	MEASUREABLE : How will you know when you have fulfilled your commitment? When I get back my results on our mid-unit and end unit assessments. Mr. Hall says there will be short response questions on these tests so I will know when I get my grades back. I should know how I do on short responses by the middle of October.	ATTAINABLE : What are THREE things that you <u>must do</u> to fulfill your commitment? 1. practice making claims about the things I read in class like Percy Jackson 2. practice finding evidence to support what I say. I have to think like it is a crime scene and I need fingerprints and videotape (☺) 3. Practice using RASSC+	RELEVANT : How will fulfilling your commitment help you in the future? I want to go to Hutch Tech or Olmstead so seventh grade is a HUGE year for me! If I score high on my ELA assessment, I will be able to get into the school that I want to go to a lot easier.	TIME BASED: By when do you want to fulfill your commitment? I want to be good at RASSC+ and get all 2s as soon as my mid unit assessment . I want to score all 2s on end unit but especially my state exam.
RESISTERS: Who or what may stop you from fulfilling your commitment? My friends-talking in class My iPad-too much use at home, distracted Laziness – I have to practice RASSC+ on my own at home		MY START DATE: 9-23-19	ASSISTORS: Who or what is going to help you complete your commitment? My older brother My mom Mrs. Payne-Patterson Mr. Hall	
<p><i>“Real integrity is doing the right thing, knowing that nobody's going to know whether you did it or not.” -Oprah Winfrey</i></p>				

Appendix H

NAME: MARTAVIA B
DATE: 10-16-19

Did I put in effort and grit?
Things I've already done to achieve my commitment:

Have I seen small changes?
Proof that my effort and grit is working:

My SMART commitment:

Improve on my short responses so I score all 2s on short responses on my NYE ELA assessment.

1. practiced RASSC+ at home

2. Asked my mom for help

3. practiced making claims and finding evidence

1. 2/2 on Exit Quiz #2

2. two 2s and a 1 on my mid unit!!!

3. Mr. Hall let me know I did better

SMART COMMITMENT CHECK-IN

What ASSISTORS have helped me so far? (I'll use more of these.)

Mom
Mr. Hall
Mrs. Payne-Patterson

What RESISTORS have hindered my progress? (I'll watch out for these.)


A littel too much time on my iPad and social media when I get home every day.

My target date:

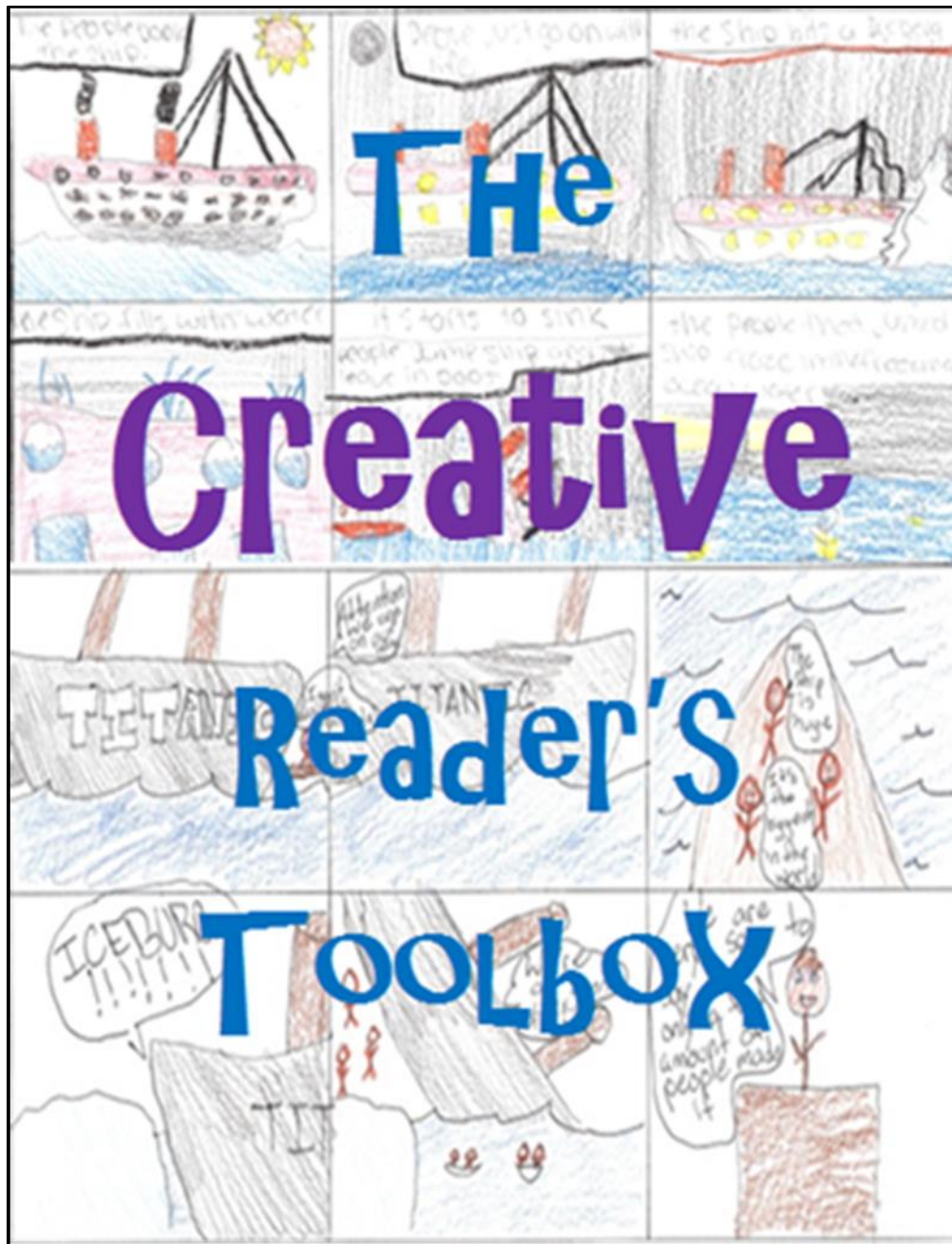
END UNIT – ALL 2s 11-6-19

GRIT= determination and courage to continue doing something even though it is very difficult

"Grit is passion and perseverance for very long-term goals. Grit is having stamina. Grit is sticking with your future, day-in, day-out. Not just for the week, not just for the month, but for years. And working really hard to make that future a reality." -Dr. Angela Lee Duckworth



Appendix I



Prior Knowledge Mind Map

PRIOR KNOWLEDGE-

all of the information that you already know about a given reading topic.

Activity: “PK Mind Map”

Did you know?

Personal connections help with comprehension! A great way to increase your understanding of a passage is to connect new information to something you already know or learned. One way to connect prior knowledge to a new reading passage is to make a “PK Mind Map.”

Steps to create a “PK Mind Map” :

- 1) Review the student sample mind map for succulent plants (located on the Tool Box Board).
- 2) In the middle of the white paper, write a major concept from the new passage you are about to read.
- 3) Now think of other words or memories that you are reminded of when you think of the concept.
- 4) Write each memory in a different spot on your paper so they are surrounding the concept. Draw a line to each word or memory, connecting it to the concept.
- 5) Now list any words or memories that you associate with the first words you wrote.
- 6) Continue the process until everything you know about the major concept is listed in a grouping on your paper.

HINT: Don't be afraid to draw pictures to go along with the words. Pictures help!

- 7) Color and decorate your mind map accordingly. Remember, everything on your mind map must relate to the major concept in some way.

MATERIALS:

1. copy of the reading passage
2. piece of white construction paper
3. pencil
4. color pencils or markers

NYS Standard:

RL.7.11
RI.7.9.a

I Can...

...recall my prior experiences in my own life to help me to better understand the content of what I am reading!

...use my experience and knowledge to think analytically, address problems creatively, and advocate persuasively!

References:

Buzan, T., Buzan, B., & Harrison, J. (2010). *The Mind map book: unlock your creativity, boost your memory, change your life* (1st ed.). New York, NY: Pearson BBC Active.

González, D. (2002). *When we peek behind the curtain: highlighting the essence of creativity methodologies: creative problem solving (CPS), Edward de Bono, mind mapping, synectics, TRIZ*. Evanston, Ill: THinc Communications.

MENTAL IMAGERY STORYBOARD

MENTAL IMAGERY-

the "mental pictures" that readers experience while reading a passage of literature.

Activity: MI Storyboard

Did you know?

By constructing "mental pictures" of what you are reading, drawing these pictures as you read, and closely studying any text illustrations, you can increase your reading comprehension skills almost instantly! Try it out! Make an MI Storyboard by following the steps listed below.

Steps to complete a MI Storyboard:

- 1) Complete a first reading of the story.
- 2) Write your name and the title of the story on the blank MI Storyboard template.
- 3) Read the story again. This time, stop at several points where you think the author provided you with the most vivid mental images. Starting at box #1, draw these images in the order they occur in the story.

HINT: To make your MI Storyboard accurate and entertaining, be sure to include a series of images from the story's beginning, middle, and end.

- 4) When you have completed the MI Storyboard, skim the story to be sure you have included images from the beginning, middle, and end.

References:

Love, B. (2014). Urban Storytelling: How Storyboarding, Moviemaking, and Hip-Hop-Based Education Can Promote Students' Critical Voice. *English Journal*, 103(5), 53–58. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1523923443/>

Lillyman, S., & Bennett, C. (2012). Using storyboarding to gain appreciative reflection in the classroom. *Reflective Practice*, 13(4), 533–539. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14623943.2012.670621>

MATERIALS:

1. copy of the reading passage
2. blank [MI Storyboard Template](#)
3. pencil
4. color pencils and markers

NYS CCR Standard:

RL.7.4

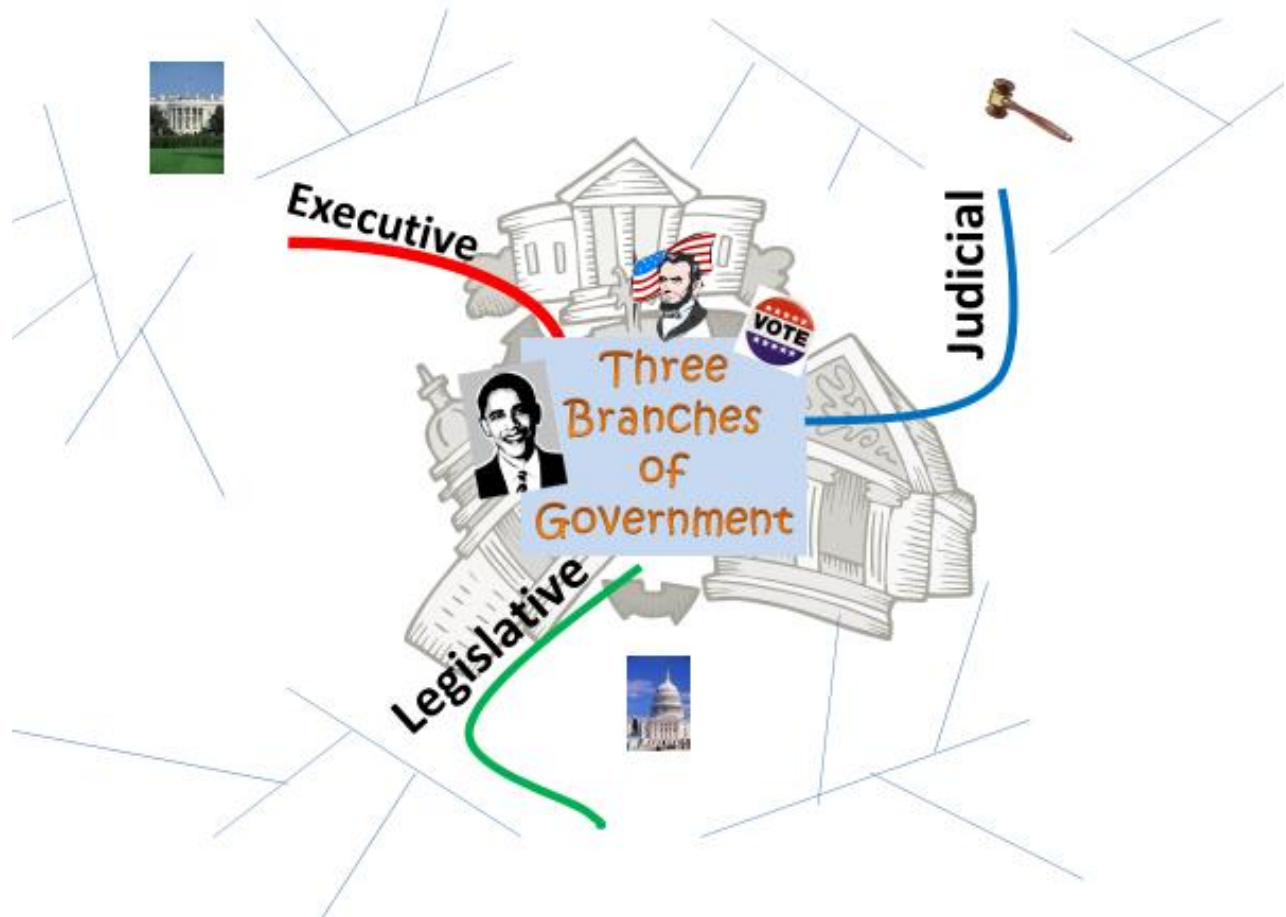
I Can...

...analyze the impact of imagery in a particular piece of writing!


Appendix J



Appendix K



Appendix L

<h1 style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">CREATIVE ACTION PLAN (CAP)</h1> <h2 style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Highgate Heights BPS#80</h2> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 10px 0;">TOPIC:</p> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 10px 0;">IMPLEMENTATION DATE:</p> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 10px 0;">DURATION:</p> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 10px 0;">FACILITATORS:</p>	<p>Process Map:</p>  <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;"><i>Creative Leadership: Skills That Drive Change</i> Puccio, Murdock, & Mance (2007)</p>			
<h2 style="margin: 0;">PHASE #1: Assessing the Situation</h2> <p style="margin: 5px 0 0 40px;">Team goal: To complete a thorough examination of the current situation</p>				
Action Steps:	Completed by:	Collaborating with:	By when:	Evidence of completion:
<h2 style="margin: 0;">PHASE #2: Exploring the Vision</h2> <p style="margin: 5px 0 0 40px;">Team Goal: To identify goals, wishes, or challenges</p> <p style="margin-top: 20px;">IWBGI...</p>				
Action Steps:	Completed by:	Collaborating with:	By when:	Evidence of completion:

<p align="center">PHASE #3: Formulating Challenges</p> <p align="center">Team goal: To reach consensus around the most pressing challenge</p> <p>IWBGI...</p>				
Action Steps:	Completed by:	Collaborating with:	By when:	Evidence of completion:
<p align="center">PHASE #4: Exploring Ideas</p> <p align="center">Team goal: To brainstorm a list of possible solutions.</p>				
Action Steps:	Completed by:	Collaborating with:	By when:	Evidence of completion:
<p align="center">PHASE #5: Formulating Solutions</p> <p align="center">Team goal: To reach consensus on short- and long-term action steps</p>				
Action Steps:	Completed by:	Collaborating with:	By when:	Evidence of completion:
<p align="center">PHASE #6: Exploring Acceptance</p> <p align="center">Team goal: To ensure alignment with school, district and state initiatives</p>				

Action Steps:	Completed by:	Collaborating with:	By when:	Evidence of completion:
PHASE #7: Formulating a Plan Team goal: To develop and implement a plan, observe, modify and adjust as needed				
Action Steps:	Completed by:	Collaborating with:	By when:	Evidence of completion:

Appendix M

CREATIVE ACTION PLAN (CAP)

Highgate Heights BPS#80

TOPIC: SHORT CONTRUCTED
RESPONSE

IMPLEMENTATION DATE: 9-1-17

DURATION: ongoing school year 17-18

FACILITATORS:

Jason Hall
Shelli-Payne Patterson
Angela Beathley

Process Map:



Creative Leadership: Skills That Drive Change
Puccio, Murdock, & Mance (2007)

PHASE #1: Assessing the Situation

Team goal: To complete a thorough examination of current short response data.

WMBAT...achievement gaps in the NYS ELA assessment data report?

Action Steps:	Completed by:	Collaborating with:	By when:	Evidence of completion:
Aggregate data from NYS ELA assessments reports - short response data only	Jason Hall Instructional Coach	Grade 6 Teaching Team	9-1-17	Data Aggregated in terms of % of students scoring 2, 1 and 0 on short response prompts
BASLINE SHORT RESPONSE ASSESSMENT #1 – NYS Released question Grades 5 and 6	Jason Hall Instructional Coach	Grade 6 Teaching Team	9-11-17	Graded class set of short responses in ELA 5 and ELA 6

PHASE #2: Exploring the Vision

Team Goal: To identify goals, wishes, or challenges

IWBGI...we increased by 20% the percentage of student scoring 2 on the NYS ELA examination.

Action Steps:	Completed by:	Collaborating with:	By when:	Evidence of completion:
PD/Grade Level #1: 1. Goal setting - % at 2 2. highlighting of challenges	Jason Hall 6-8 ELA Coach	Grade 6 Teaching Team	9-12-17	-Grade level meeting notes -goal set for 17-18 school year -challenges documented

PHASE #3: Formulating Challenges

Team goal: To build off meeting #1 and reach consensus around the most pressing challenge.

IWBGI...students began their answer by restating the question.

IWBGI...students answered the question by making a claim.

IWBGI...students stated one piece of relevant evidence to support their claim.

IWBGI...students stated a second piece of relevant evidence to support their claim.

IWBGI...wrapped up their answer with a concluding statement that restates their answer.

Action Steps:	Completed by:	Collaborating with:	By when:	Evidence of completion:
PD/Grade Level #2: 1. short response challenges	Jason Hall Instructional Coach	Grade 6 Teaching Team	9-19-17	-Grade level meeting notes -challenges clearly documented

PHASE #4: Exploring Ideas

Team goal: To brainstorm a list of possible solutions.

IWBGI...if we could work as a team to brainstorm a writing structure for short responses.

Action Steps:	Completed by:	Collaborating with:	By when:	Evidence of completion:

PD/Grade Level #3: 1. short response writing structures	Jason Hall Instructional Coach	Grade 6 Teaching Team	9-26-17	-Grade level meeting notes -list of possible writing structures/organizers to implement
PHASE #5: Formulating Solutions Team goal: To reach consensus on short- and long-term action steps				
Action Steps:	Completed by:	Collaborating with:	By when:	Evidence of completion:
PD/Grade Level #3: 1. finalize short response writing structures 2. begin brainstorming action steps to implement structure	Jason Hall Instructional Coach	Grade 6 Teaching Team	9-26-17	-Grade level meeting notes -consensus reached on short response writing structure -list of brainstormed action steps to implement and monitor new structure
PHASE #6: Exploring Acceptance Team goal: To ensure alignment with school, district and state initiatives				
Action Steps:	Completed by:	Collaborating with:	By when:	Evidence of completion:
Meet with Mrs. Gayle Irving-White (principal) -gain approval for new short response writing structure, review actions steps	Jason Hall Instructional Coach Grade 6 Teaching Team	Mrs. Gayle Irving-White	9-29-19	Granted approval to proceed with actions plan/action steps.
PHASE #7: Formulating a Plan Team goal: To develop and implement a plan, observe, modify and adjust as needed				

Action Steps:	Completed by:	Collaborating with:	By when:	Evidence of completion:
PD/Grade Level #4: "Using RASSC to Increase Proficiency with Constructed Responses"	Jason Hall Instructional Coach	Grade 6 Teaching Team	10-2-17	-Grade level meeting notes -PowerPoint -RASSC Analysis completed-COLOR CODED -data chart -causes chart
"Pirates or Merchants" RASSC Workshop	Jason Hall Instructional Coach	Grade 6 Teaching Team	10-3-17	-constructed response (short) formative assessment entrance and exit slips
RASSC TEAM ANALYSIS	Jason Hall Instructional Coach	Grade 6 Teaching Team	10-5-17	-assessed, color coded constructed response (short) formative assessment entrance and exit slips
Introduce RASSC to the specials teachers	Jason Hall Instructional Coach	Grade 6 Teaching Team	10-9-17	Data charts ready: RASSC vs. NO RASSC Training exit ticket Colored responses
RASSC anchor charts for classrooms	Grade 6 Teaching Team	-AIS teachers -subject teachers	10-10-17 (all)	-RASSC anchor chart displayed in each classroom -across disciplines
Review progress towards action steps at coaches meeting	Jason Hall Instructional Coach	Gayle Irving-White	10-12-17	-progress is clear, data supports progress

Module instruction and additional classroom practice with RASSC	Grade 6 Teaching Team	Jason Hall Instructional Coach	Ongoing through school year 2017-2018	Sets of student short responses from ELA modules brought to and analyzed at DDI meetings.
Analyze, modify and adjust short response module materials, instruction, etc. based on data analyses	Grade 6 Teaching Team	Jason Hall Instructional Coach	Ongoing through school year 2017-2018	Exit tickets, quick writes, etc. modified to include opportunities to use RASSC. Lessons inclusive of textual evidence requirements are highlighted, emphasized, retaught when necessary.
DDI Meetings: continue analysis of student constructed responses and use of RASSC	Jason Hall Instructional Coach	ELA 6 Teaching Team	Ongoing through school year 2017-2018	-student responses analyzed -student performance gaps highlighted -new action steps formulated.
Students are trained to become NYS ELA Assessment short response holistic graders	3-8 ELA Teaching Team TAs	Jason Hall 6-8 ELA Coach Gregelle Fulcher Literacy Coach Gina Pecoraro Building Coach	Ongoing through school year 2017-2018	NYS 0-2 short response holistic rubric training workshop completed. Student are engaged in a variety of grading activities.
Students create maintain portfolios to analyze their own progress towards mastering RASSC/citing textual evidence	Students 3-8 ELA Teaching Team TAs	Jason Hall 6-8 ELA Coach Gregelle Fulcher Literacy Coach Gina Pecoraro Building Coach	Ongoing through school year 2015-2016	Portfolios completed, inclusive of student reflections.

DDI Meetings: ANALYZE NYS ELA EXAM SHORT RESPONSE DATA	Students 3-8 ELA Teaching Team TAs	Jason Hall 6-8 ELA Coach Gregelle Fulcher Literacy Coach Gina Pecoraro Building Coach	September 2018	Data charts, analyses, etc.
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Appendix N

RASSC –Anchor Chart

R/A – restate and answer the question

S – support detail #1

The text states...

According to the passage...

One example from the text/photograph/chart is...

The author states...

As seen in the photograph/chart/diagram...

S – support detail #2

The text also states...

Another example from the text/photograph/chart is...

The author also states...

The photograph/chart/diagram also includes...

C – concluding sentence

This shows...

This demonstrates...

Appendix O

[illegible]

References

- Land, G. (1973). *Grow or die: The unifying principle of transformation*. New York: Random House.
- Land, G., & Jarman, B. (1993). *Breakpoint and beyond: Mastering the future –today*. New York: Harper Collins.
- Plattner, H. (2010). *D. school bootcamp bootleg*. Institute of Design at Stanford. Retrieved from <http://dschool.stanford.edu/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/BootcampBootleg2010.pdf>
- Puccio, G. (2012). *Creativity rising: creative problem solving in the 21st century*. Buffalo, NY: ICSC Press, International Center for Studies in Creativity.
- Puccio, G., Mance, M., & Murdock, M. (2011). *Creative leadership: skills that drive change* (2nd edition. ed.). Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE.
- Torrance, E. P. (1999). *Making the creative leap beyond*. Creative Education Foundation Press
- Vehar, J., Firestien, R., & Miller, B. (1997). *Creativity unbound: an introduction to creative problem solving*. Williamsville, NY: Innovation Systems Group.

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Name

December 12, 2019

Date